

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner restricted the claims and required election. Applicants elect claims 1-12. Claims 13-27 have been cancelled, but may be pursued in a divisional application.

Claims 1, 4-5, and 10-11 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by McMorrow, et al. (U. S. Patent No. 6,569,097). Claims 2 and 6 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMorrow, et al. in view of Zulauf (U.S. Patent No. 5,482,043). Claims 3 and 8 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMorrow, et al. in view of Hossack, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,201,900). Claims 7-9 and 11 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMorrow, et al. in view of McMorrow, et al. '468 (U.S. Patent No. 6,905,468). Claim 12 was rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMorrow, et al. in view of Mullen, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,224,551). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections of claims 1-12, including independent claim 1.

Independent claim 1 recites acquiring ultrasound image data at a first local location, the ultrasound data being responsive to detection and/or scan conversion, transmitting to a remote location, and receiving processed data from the remote location.

McMorrow, et al. do not disclose these limitations. McMorrow, et al. provide remote evaluation of ultrasound information (title; and abstract). To avoid the cost of a general purpose ultrasound machine (col. 1, lines 21-27), the processing to provide a recognizable result is performed remotely (col. 2, lines 18-27; and col. 3, lines 11-15). A data collection device receives channel or element data for output (col. 4, lines 19-34; and figure 3). The data collection device is fairly simple without significant processing power (col. 4, lines 51-54). The processing of the channel data then occurs at the web server (col. 4, lines 58-60). McMorrow, et al. avoid having an ultrasound system at the scanning location, so provide raw data to the remote location (col. 6, lines 20-22; and col. 7, lines 41-50). McMorrow, et al. do not disclose acquiring image data responsive to detection and/or scan conversion for transmission to a remote location.

Dependent claims 2-12 depend from claim 1, so are allowable for the same reasons. The dependent claims are allowable for other reasons. For example, claim 4 recites quantification data, but McMorrow, et al. describe diagnosis and 3D image data (col. 6, lines 20-32). Claim 6 recites entering data with a user input at the remote location where the entered data is the data responsive to the image data received from the remote location. Zulauf provide for remote location voice or data feedback for patient positioning and exam administration (col. 5, lines 23-34; and col. 7, lines 1-21), but not entry of data responsive to the image data. Claim 3 recites a filtered version of the image data as the processed data. The cited portion of Hossack, et al. shows estimating motion between frames, not filtering at the remote site. Claim 12 recites encrypting prior to transmitting or receiving. Mullen shows password protection limiting access (col. 2, line 64-col. 3, line 15), not encryption.


Regarding claims 7-9 and 11, a person of ordinary skill in the art would not have used the teachings of McMorrow, et al. '468 with McMorrow, et al. to the extent '468 shows local imaging. McMorrow, et al. teaches away from local processing. In addition, '468 does not show the "during the imaging session" aspects of claim 9.

CONCLUSION:

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seeks early allowance thereof. If for any reason, the Examiner is unable to allow the application but believes that an interview would be helpful to resolve any issues, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at (650) 943-7554 or Craig Summerfield at (312) 321-4726.

PLEASE MAIL CORRESPONDENCE TO: Respectfully submitted,

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